

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1803**

January 9, 2019

Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
H232 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Steny Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
705 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer,

I write to you today with concern over the enforcement of the United States (U.S.) House of Representative rules for the conduction of official business. Specifically, House Rule XVII, clause 1, Section b (Rule XVII) which covers "Decorum and Debate."

As you are aware, Democrat members of the House of Representatives have been recently filmed at public and private events using hostile and inappropriate language when referring to the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump. While I believe this rhetoric is harmful to our nation, I do understand that they are entitled to voice their opinions in any manner they deem fit as protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution when not on the House floor.

However, since January 3, 2019, I have seen a drastic increase in hostile language being used on the House floor during debates, votes, and morning hour speeches regarding our President. These acts are in direct violation of House Rule 17, Clause 1, Section b (Decorum and Debate) of the House Manual which states:

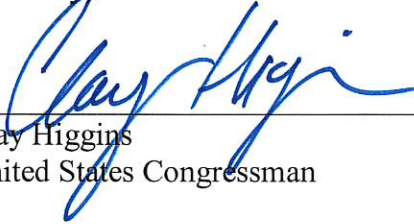
"Remarks in debate shall be confined to the question under debate, avoiding personality"

Clear precedent of the House, as outlined in Section 370 of Jefferson's Manual, applies this rule to remarks referencing the President of the United States.

This rule is in place to preserve Congress's reverence during the course of its official work. Regardless of political beliefs or affiliation with a particular party, the Office of the Presidency deserves respect. Failure to adhere to this principle sets a dangerous precedent that will only perpetuate or exacerbate the current polarization that has overtaken much of our work.

I respectfully request that you honor tradition and responsibilities of decorum as outlined under Rule I of the House of Representatives, which states "the Speaker shall preserve order and decorum" by ensuring that Rule XVII is enforced in full on the House Floor. I appreciate your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



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Clay Higgins  
United States Congressman

CC:

Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
H204 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Steve Scalise  
Minority Whip  
H148 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515